

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PK, US, PFOR

SUBJECT: MEETING WITH AMBASSADOR YAQUB-KHAN, JUNE 13

REF: (A) ISLAMABAD 6036 (B) ISLAMABAD 6061

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY DUBS MET WITH AMBASSADOR YAQUB-KHAN TO DISCUSS STATEMENTS MADE IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ON JUNE 10 AND OTHER RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN PAKISTAN. DUBS NOTED THAT PRIME MINISTER'S STATEMENT THAT PAKISTAN WAS PREPARED TO OPEN A NEW CHAPTER OF GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE U.S. WAS ENCOURAGING BUT CONTRADICTED BY OTHER COMMENTS AS WELL AS BY A REVIVAL OF THE ANTI-AMERICAN THEME IN THE PAKISTANI PRESS. DUBS SAID THAT U.S. IS INTERESTED IN RESTORING AMICABLE RELATIONS ON THE BASIS OF MUTUAL RESPECT, CONFIDENCE, AND RECIPROCITY. YAQUB-KHAN STATED THAT HE COULD SAY OFFICIALLY THAT THE STATEMENTS REPRESENTED A STEP BACKWARD FROM THE PARIS MEETING BETWEEN SECRETARY VANCE AND FOREIGN MINISTER AZIZ AHMED. SPEAKING PERSONALLY, HE THOUGHT THAT THE ANTI-AMERICAN THEME WOULD
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UNDOUBTEDLY ARISE AGAIN IN ANOTHER ELECTION CAMPAIGN AND THAT U.S.-PAKISTANI RELATIONS WOULD EXPERIENCE FURTHER JOLTS.
END SUMMARY.

2. IN HIS MEETING WITH YAQUB-KHAN, DUBS MADE THE FOLLOWING POINTS: (A) WE HAVE RECEIVED REPORTS OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S AND FOREIGN MINISTER'S REMARKS BEFORE THE NATIONAL

ASSEMBLY ON JUNE 10. WE WERE PUZZLED BY THEIR CONTRADICTORY NATURE. WE NOTED, ON THE ONE HAND, THAT THE PRIME MINISTER SAID THAT PAKISTAN WAS PREPARED TO OPEN A NEW CHAPTER OF GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE U.S. AND THAT HE DID NOT WANT TO PURSUE A COURSE THAT WOULD UNDERMINE PAKISTAN'S BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION WITH THE U.S. (B) ON THE OTHER HAND, OTHER REMARKS WERE SEEN AS A SETBACK TO EFFORTS TO RESTORE GOOD RELATIONS. THE PRIME MINISTER IMPLIED THAT ALLEGED INTERFERENCE BY THE U.S. IN DOMESTIC AFFAIRS HAD NOT CEASED. THIS COULD BE INFERRED FROM HIS COMMENT THAT AN ADDITIONAL TEN PAGES HAD BEEN ADDED SINCE THE PARIS MEETING, TO THE FIFTY-PAGE FILE DETAILING ALLEGED INSTANCES OF AMERICAN INTERVENTION IN PAKISTAN'S DOMESTIC AFFAIRS. MOREOVER, THE PRIME MINISTER ALLEGED, WITHOUT FOUNDATION, THAT THE U.S. WAS PUNITIVE AND UNREASONABLE IN ITS APPROACH TO THE REPROCESSING ISSUE. (C) FOREIGN MINISTER AZIZ AHMED WAS HIGHLY SELECTIVE IN HIS USE OF QUOTATIONS FROM CONFIDENTIAL EXCHANGES ON THE REPROCESSING ISSUE, THUS CONVEYING A DISTORTED PICTURE OF THE PRIVATE RECORD. (D) IN ADDITION, WE ARE DEEPLY DISTURBED BY A SHARP REVIVAL OF ANTI-AMERICAN THEMES IN THE PAKISTAN PRESS, INCLUDING A GROUNDLESS REPORT IN THE "PAKISTAN TIMES" OF JUNE 11 THAT A MEETING HAD TAKEN PLACE IN PESHAWAR BETWEEN ASGHAR KHAN AND A U.S. DIPLOMAT FROM KABUL. THERE IS NO BASIS IN FACT FOR SUCH A REPORT AND WE HAVE A DIFFICULT TIME UNDERSTANDING HOW IT COULD HAVE BEEN GENERATED AND REPORTED IN THE CONTROLLED PAKISTANI PRESS. WE REMAIN INTERESTED IN FOCUSING ON THE FUTURE OF OUR RELATIONSHIP AND NOT ON RECRIMINATIONS RELATING TO THE
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PAST, BUT OUR RELATIONS MUST BE BASED ON MUTUAL RESPECT, CONFIDENCE, AND RECIPROCITY.

3. YAQUB-KHAN SAID THAT UP TO NOW HE HAD RECEIVED INCOMPLETE REPORTS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY STATEMENTS OF JUNE 10. HE THOUGHT THEY REPRESENTED A STEP BACKWARD FROM THE PARIS MEETING BETWEEN SECRETARY VANCE AND AZIZ AHMED. HE COMMENTED THAT BETWEEN THE PARIS MEETING AND JUNE 10 BHUTTO MAY HAVE CONCLUDED THAT THE U.S. WAS STILL ATTEMPTING TO SUPPORT HIS OPPOSITION, BASING HIS PERCEPTION ON THE TIMING OF THE A-7 DECISION, THE REPROCESSING STORY FROM PARIS, AND THE O'KEEFE MEMORANDUM. THE LEAK OF THE A-7 DECISION COULD HAVE BEEN TROUBLESOME FOR BHUTTO BECAUSE HE MAY HAVE SEEN THIS AS INDIRECT SUPPORT OF THE PNA AND AS CAUSING THE OPPOSITION TO BE MORE RECALCITRANT IN ITS NEGOTIATIONS WITH HIM. IN ADDITION, THERE WERE NOW REPORTS OF A MEETING OF A U.S. DIPLOMAT WITH ASGHAR KHAN

IN PESHAWAR. SPEAKING PERSONALLY, HE WAS RATHER PESSI-

MISTIC ABOUT PROSPECTS FOR AN IMPROVEMENT IN U.S.-PAKISTANI RELATIONS IN THE PERIOD IMMEDIATELY AHEAD, ESPECIALLY IN LIGHT OF ANOTHER ELECTION CAMPAIGN IN WHICH THE U.S. WOULD LIKELY AGAIN BECOME A POLITICAL FOOTBALL. HE AT ONE TIME HAD SUGGESTED, PERSONALLY, THAT A VISIT BY BHUTTO TO THE U.S. MIGHT BE A WAY OF OVERCOMING PRESENT DIFFICULTIES AND MISUNDERSTANDINGS. AGAIN, ON A PERSONAL BASIS, HE WOULD HAVE TO RECOMMEND THAT SUCH A VISIT WOULD BE INOPPORTUNE AND IMPRACTICAL FOR THE TIME BEING.

4. DUBS DEPLORED POSSIBILITIES OF ANY FURTHER REPETITION OF UNFOUNDED ALLEGATIONS OF U.S. INTERFERENCE OR EXPLOITATION OF ANTI-AMERICAN THEMES BY OFFICIALS AND THE PAKISTANI PRESS FOR DOMESTIC POLITICAL PURPOSES. MISREPRESENTATIONS OF U.S. POLICIES COMBINED WITH ANTI-AMERICAN STATEMENTS COULD ONLY RESULT IN A SEVERE SETBACK TO EFFORTS TO RESTORE GOOD RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES.
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TRIES.

5. FYI. ALTHOUGH WE SHOULD TAKE STRONG EXCEPTION TO MALICIOUS AND FALSE REPORTS OF MEETINGS BETWEEN U.S. OFFICIALS AND MEMBERS OF THE OPPOSITION, WE SHOULD TAKE CARE NOT TO LEAVE PAKISTANI OFFICIALS WITH THE IMPRESSION THAT WE CONSIDER IT IMPROPER FOR U.S. EMBASSY OFFICIALS TO HAVE WIDE-RANGING CONTACTS WITHIN PAKISTANI SOCIETY, INCLUDING CONTACTS WITH THOSE WHO MAY HOLD VIEWS DIFFERING FROM THOSE OF THE RULING PARTY. END FYI. CHRISTOPHER

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